

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested. Previously the amended drawings were accepted and there are no objections to the Specification.

Office Action dated 13 September 2006 rejected:

- Claims 1-8 as being obvious over Izaguirre (US Patent 5,305,779) in view of Koenig et al (US Patent 5,923,102)
- Claims 9-18 as being obvious over Izaguirre in view of Koenig et al and Adahan (US 5,592,030)
- Claims 19-20 as being obvious over Izaguirre in view of Koenig, Adahand and Niedermeyer (US Patent 3,941,507).

Applicant has amended each independent claim (Claims 1, 9 and 15) and provides the following additional comments. Dependent Claims 19 and 20 are new.

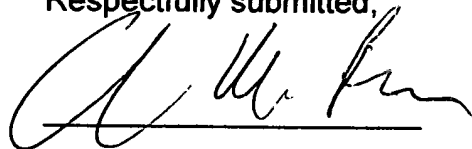
As discussed in an Examiner interview in October 2006, Applicant believes that it is improper to combine Izaguirre with Koenig et al since Izaguirre is directed to large industrial pump AC applications and Koenig et al is directed to much smaller applications that on might consider running on DC voltage. (In fact, Izaguirre concerns an environmental protection or containment system for “operating large power generating stations” (title) such as is used “in a hydroelectric power station located within an hydroelectric dam” (Col. 6, lines 22-30). The Examiner also admits that Izaguirre fails to teach the claimed AC to DC power conversion.)

In any case, to move prosecution forward and as a further independent ground for distinguishing the art, in the Interview, Applicant pointed out that the art requires either a containment vessel (e.g., a tank, or drilling of a hole, or the like) which would require knowing beforehand the location of a relatively substantial amount of liquid (which by definition is not providing a leak detection system) in the absence of a containment vessel. The currently amended claims distinguish from the cited art in that the claims require the sensing of a small amount of liquid, namely, a liquid bridge as low as 1/16 of an inch deep in an area that is not inside a liquid containment vessel. Support for the claims appears throughout the application, such as in paragraphs 29 and 30:

- "In Figure 1, sensor 5 preferable is placed in an area where liquid is likely to collect, such a low point, near a known leak, near sinks, water tanks, washing machines, toilets, plumbing systems, water lines, basements and basement crawl spaces (paragraph 29)
- "Sensor 5 preferably uses an open collector electronic trigger which simulates a simple dry condition, such that the sensor is not activated in a dry condition. When a moisture or liquid bridge as low as 1/16 of an inch of liquid 2 is present near sensor 5, an electrical condition between two sensor contacts 7 (not shown) of sensor 5 will complete a circuit which sends current to, and activates, an electronic relay switch 15 (not shown)." (Para 30).

Thus, Claims 1-20 are considered to be allowable. All objections and rejections having been addressed, and it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner disagrees, applicant would like to request an interview with the Examiner at the Examiner's convenience.

Respectfully submitted,



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